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FORGIVENESS “KSHAMA (क्षमा)” IN HINDUISM

A Mini Pravachan

Based on Hindu Scriptures &

Historical Records

By

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VEDIC DEFINITION OF KSHAMA

“Restraining intolerance in interacting with people and restraining impatience with circumstances.”

Implies remaining serene, patient and observing self-restraint under all circumstances, doing good to all, even to those who might have harmed you.

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FORGIVENESS IS A TRAIT OF THE VIRTUOUS AND STRONG!

एकः कषमावतां दोषो द्वितीयो नोपलभ्यते
यद् एनं कषमया युक्तम अशक्तं मन्यते जनः

*Those who forgive have one misleading flaw:
Ordinary men consider the forgiving as weak.
But this is false since forgiveness is indeed the
greatest strength and an adornment to the strong!*
(Mahabharat 5:33:47)

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FORGIVENESS ALONE RESULTS IN ULTIMATE PEACE

एको धर्मः परं श्रेयः कषमैका शान्तिर उत्तमा
विद्यैका परमा दृष्टिर अहिंसैका सुखावहा

Dharma alone is one's greatest benefactor.

Forgiveness alone results in ultimate peace.

*Knowledge alone is the supreme insight. Ahimsa
alone gives happiness.*

(Mahabharat 5:33:48)

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FORGIVENESS IS AN INDOMITABLE WEAPON TO FIGHT THE WICKED

दवाव इमौ गरसते भूमिः सर्पो बिलशयान इव
राजानं चाविरोद्धारं ब्राह्मणं चाप्रवासिनम

When a spark of fire falls on a place that has no straw, it gets extinguished automatically. And he who never forgives others enmeshes himself with great flaws.

(Mahabharat 5:33:49)

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REVENGE IS THE WRONG WAY TO FIGHT THE WICKED AND THE UNJUST

"If a dog bites a man, he does not bite the dog back. Therefore, if a wicked man humiliates a virtuous one, the latter should not seek revenge."

"An Eye for an Eye Makes the Whole World Blind!"

-Mahatma Gandhi

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EGO IS A MAJOR OBSTACLE IN FORGIVING OTHERS

- *It is not easy for a spiritually weak person to forgive others, especially if one is badly hurt or harmed.*
- *The ego is the one which hurts and gets hurt. It plays an important role in personal conflicts and in hurting others or becoming hurt by them in the process.*
- *It is easily offended because it is vulnerable to anger, envy, pride, lust, etc.*
- *Ego is the cause of desires, attachments, expectations, restlessness and mental instability.*

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FORGIVENESS IS THE ELEMENT OF GOD AND HIS SAINTS

- *One day, Maharishi Bhriugu went to Vaikuntha to see Lord Vishnu.*
- *Lord Vishnu was taking a long nap.*
- *Bhriugu kicked the chest of Lord Vishnu hard to wake him up.*
- *Lord Vishnu, instead of getting angry at Bhriugu, smiled and said, "Respected Bhriugu, I am sorry for hurting you. My chest is very strong and hard. I hope your foot did not get hurt. Let me give your foot a massage."*
- *Rishi Bhriugu was very impressed with Bhagawan Vishnu's behavior. He went and told all the other Rishis about this.*



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FORGIVENESS IS THE ELEMENT OF GOD AND HIS SAINTS (CONTD.)

- *St. Vedānta Deśika was a great scholar of Hindu Dharma.*
- *His colleagues were jealous of his fame so they decided to play a practical joke on him to mock him.*
- *They hung a large garland of their shoes on the outside door frame of his house and hid themselves to watch the fun.*
- *When Deśikā opened the door next morning and stepped out to take a bath in the nearby river, his head hit the shoes.*
- *Deśikā remained calm & composed, and told them that to please Bhagwan, everyone does some good deeds, and his good deeds are to worship the shoes the devotees of Lord Vishnu. Upon hearing this the jeering colleagues felt ashamed and asked his forgiveness, which desika granted.*



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FORGIVENESS IS THE ELEMENT OF GOD AND HIS SAINTS (CONTD.)

- *Sant Dadu's fame as a great devotee of Bhagavān spread. People from afar started coming to listen to his sermons on Bhakti.*
- *The Kotwal (The Head) of the city heard about him, and set out on his horseback to see him.*
- *He came across a man cleaning the path of thorns and level it all alone. The Kotwāl asked the man, "Do you know where Sant Dadu lives? The man simply smiled and was silent.*
- *The Kotwal asked him again and again, but the man did not respond.*
- *Kotwal got angry and whipped the man with several lashes.*
- *After proceeding a few more yards, Kotwal asked another man about the whereabouts of Sant Dadu. The man replied: "' Sant Dadu spends this time of the day cleaning the paths of thorns and level them so that the travelers can cover their journey more easily. Did you not seem him on the way?"*
- *The Kotwāl fell at the feet of the Sant and begged for forgiveness, and asked why the Sant did not identify himself earlier when he whipped him.*
- *Sant Dadu replied: "The path to Bhagavān is littered with thorns of anger, jealousy, pride and other evils. Unless you pluck these evils from the path of spiritual journey, how can you hope to reach Bhagavān?"*



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THE END

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